THE MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY COMMITTEE.

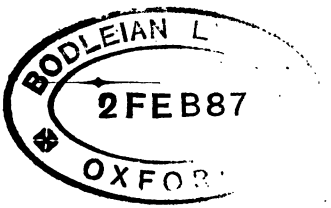
THE HON. MRS. NORTON

AND

MARRIED WOMEN.

BY

ARTHUR ARNOLD.



MANCHESTER:
A. IRELAND AND CO., PRINTERS, PALL MALL.
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TO

MRS. JACOB BRIGHT

AND

MRS. WOLSTENHOLME ELMY.

I CANNOT ALLOW AN OPPORTUNITY TO PASS
WITHOUT EXPRESSING MY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE
IN REGARD TO
THE LAWS RELATING TO MARRIED WOMEN.
YOUR INCOMPARABLE LABOURS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THOSE LAWS
HAVE MY RESPECTFUL ADMIRATION.
PLEASE CONSIDER MY CONSENT TO REPUBLICATION CONDITIONAL
UPON THE APPEARANCE OF THIS NOTE
BY WAY OF PREFACE.

A. A.

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THE

HON. MRS. NORTON AND MARRIED WOMEN.

IN the qualities of brilliancy and eloquence, Mrs. Norton was the most distinguished literary woman of her time. As a novelist she was chiefly known; but Mrs. Norton's most brilliant and eloquent compositions were not works of fiction. Her style was not employed in its perfection to protest against any other wrongs or to depict other sorrows than those which had pierced her own heart. This is not an imputation of selfishness; it is merely an illustration of the fact that the highest and most successful efforts of genius are those which have their inspiration from the deepest feelings.

Mrs. Norton's finest writings related to her condition as a married woman, and these have been brought but little to the notice of the public; not because she desired privacy—in a letter to the present writer she said, "I do not shrink from publicity as to a single word I have printed"—but because of the personality with which those writings are pervaded. It is not my intention to revive by any unnecessary allusion the recollection of those wrongs the burden of which forced from Mrs. Norton such passionate eloquence. It is to her legal disabilities as a married woman, illustrated by herself, that the present reference will be confined. No hope is more anxiously urged in those appeals than that the outpouring of her own indignation may, by producing amendment of the laws concerning married women, have a useful result. "I do not consider this MY cause," she wrote in her "Letter to the Queen"—"though it is a cause of which (unfortunately for me) I am an illustration. It is the cause of ALL the women;" and as a knight devotes his sword, so she consecrated her pen first and chiefly to enmity against those laws which still

deny legal equality and even legal existence to married women. In some minor points, the laws relating to married women have been amended; but the "non-existence" against which she protested, and, substantially, the *status* of a married woman, remain unaltered. There has been no change since the time when Mrs. Norton wrote—when Sir Erskine Perry proposed in the House of Commons to give them legal existence in terms very similar to those of the Bill which Mr. Shaw-Lefevre again introduced in a most able speech in 1868, and to those in which Lord Coleridge made an equally ineffective proposal last year.

A husband cannot now confiscate the earnings of his wife, but he can paralyse her power of earning by prohibition. When inquiry was made into the amount of Mrs. Norton's literary earnings, which, as the law then stood, were the property of her husband, she declared the proceeding had made her dream that her

. . . gift of writing was meant for a higher and stronger purpose—that gift which came, not from man, but from God. It was meant to enable me to rouse the hearts of others to examine into all the gross injustice of these laws—to ask the "nation of gallant gentlemen" whose countrywoman I am, for once to hear a woman's pleading on the subject. Not because I deserve more at their hands than other women. Well I know, on the contrary, how many hundreds, infinitely better than I—more pious, more patient, less rash under injury—have watered their bread with tears! My plea to attention is, that in pleading for myself, I am able to plead for all these others. Not that my sufferings or my deserts are greater than theirs; but that I combine with the fact of having suffered wrong, the power to comment on and explain the cause of that wrong, which few women are able to do.

For *this*, I believe God gave me the power of writing. To this I devote that power. . . . I deny that this is my personal cause; it is the cause of all the women of England. If I could be justified and happy to-morrow I would still labour in it; and if I were to die to-morrow it would still be a satisfaction to me that I had so striven.

Mrs. Norton suffered because she was a woman. Had her case been that of a man, the result could have left no such trouble in the path of life. She had the personal sympathy of the King (William IV.); the friendly aid of the King of the Belgians:

He who learned perhaps to feel more, having suffered more than others; and who remembered me in my early girlhood, and in my mother's home; he who was husband and father to the heirs of the English Crown; and who in the pride and prime of his own youth saw the sun set one December night on that triumphantly happy position, and saw it rise—a childless widower.

She had with her—

Public opinion and the good wishes of good hearts. To what end? Vain, though not valueless, has been this accumulation of kindness, from friends, relatives, and strangers, for want of such laws of protection! They could pity, but they could not help. . . . It is a glorious thing that the Law should be stronger than the Throne. It is one of dear boastful England's proudest blind boasts. But it is *not* a glorious thing that, being stronger than the Throne, it should be weaker than the subject; and that that which even a king can only do within a certain limit—(oppress or uphold)—may be done with boundless irresponsible power in the one single relation of husband and wife.

When Mrs. Norton wrote thus in 1855, the Law relating to Husband and Wife was in a somewhat different condition from that which obtains at present. It was different in regard to Divorce, to the Custody of Infants, and to the Property of Married Women. I propose to show, as far as possible in Mrs. Norton's own words, but entirely in harmony, as I believe, with her opinions, what has been the extent of those reforms, and in what directions they have been insufficient. At that time, divorce was a "luxury for the rich, to be obtained only by special enactment in the House of Lords." But for women there was neither justice nor divorce. Lord Brougham had lately affirmed in his place in Parliament concerning a case which had come before him as one of the Law Lords: "In that action the character of the woman was at immediate issue, although she was not prosecuted. The consequence not unfrequently was, that the character of a woman was sworn away; instances were known in which, by collusion between the husband and a pretended paramour, the character of the wife has been destroyed. All this could take place, and yet the wife had no defence; she was excluded from Westminster Hall, and behind her back, by the principles of our jurisprudence, her character was tried."

No Law Court could then divorce in England. A special Act of Parliament annulling the marriage was passed for each case. The House of Lords granted this almost as a matter of course to the husband who could pay for it, but not to the wife. In only four recorded instances (two of which were cases of incest) did a wife obtain a divorce. Addressing the Queen, Mrs. Norton wrote:

In an old-fashioned book (written by a favourite of your Majesty's uncle,

George IV.) the author says: "If a poor man were to appear in the lobby of the House of Lords, praying to be divorced *gratis* from his wife, it is likely that the Sergeant-at-Arms would take him for some poor lunatic, and send him to Bedlam."

The law on this great matter has since that time been changed by four statutes. The Divorce and Matrimonial Act, passed shortly after the publication of Mrs. Norton's eloquent pamphlet, established the new Court; and it was provided that either husband or wife might obtain a divorce on the ground of adultery, but the wife can only present a petition for divorce upon allegation that the marital offence has been accompanied by cruelty or desertion. By a subsequent Act the power of decreeing divorce was given to the Judge Ordinary, without reference to colleagues, with the provision that the decree must be "*nisi*," and not final, for at least three months. The third statute relieved the clergy of the Church of England as by law established from obligation to perform the religious office at the marriage of any divorced person. The supplementary provisions of the law are;—as to condonation—that parties who, after the offence charged, have consented to live again as husband and wife, cannot obtain a divorce. Judicial separation may be decreed on the ground of adultery (on the part of the man without desertion or cruelty), or upon proof of cruelty or desertion. After such separation a woman is as a single woman in everything except re-marriage; and even prior to a decree of separation, a woman may obtain legal protection for any property which may result from her own industry. The fourth statute, the Matrimonial Causes Act, 1878, empowers the Court or Magistrate before whom a husband is convicted of an aggravated assault upon his wife, to issue an order which shall have the effect in all respects of a decree of judicial separation on the ground of cruelty; and the order may further provide for the payment by the husband to the wife of such weekly sum as the Court or Magistrate may consider to be in accordance with his means, and with any means which the wife may have for her support.

Mrs. Norton's infant children were taken from her under circumstances which could be repeated to-day, the blameless wife having power to reclaim them only by petition. The natural right of the mother to the care and guardianship of her infant

children is not acknowledged by the law. But there was no power of petition when she wrote:

At that time the law was (and I thank God I believe I was greatly instrumental in changing that law) that a man might take children from the mother at any age, and without any fault or offence on her part. There had been an instance in which the husband seized and carried away a suckling infant, as his wife sate nursing it in her own mother's house. Another in which the husband, being himself in prison for debt, gave his wife's legitimate child to the woman he cohabited with. A third (in which the parties were of high rank), where the husband deserted his wife; claimed the babe born after his desertion (having already his other children); and left her to learn its death from the newspaper! A fourth, in which the husband, living with a mistress, and travelling with her under his wife's name, the latter appealed for a separation to the Ecclesiastical Court; and the adulterous husband, to revenge himself, claimed from her his three infant girls. In all these cases, and in all other cases, the claim of the father was held to be indisputable. There was no law then to help the mother, as there is no law now to help the wife. The blamelessness of the mother signified nothing in those days, as the blamelessness of the wife signifies nothing in the present day.

It was upon the occurrence of this cruel addition to her wrongs that the most eminent of the distinguished counsel who had been opposed to Mrs. Norton's claims, stated concerning her, that "there never was a more deeply injured woman." She herself wrote of it:

What I suffered respecting those children God knows, and He only; what I endured, and yet lived past—of pain, exasperation, helplessness, and despair, under the evil law which suffered any man, for vengeance or for interest, to take baby children from the mother—I shall not even try to explain. I believe *men* have no more notion of what that anguish is than the blind have of colours; and I bless God that at least mine was one of the cases which called attention to the state of the law as it then existed.

As it now stands, the English law defining the mother's rights in regard to the care of children, is, as Mrs. Norton has said, far from justice. The Matrimonial Causes Act, 1878, empowers a Court or Magistrate to give the legal custody of her children, if they are under ten years of age, to a wife who has obtained an order for judicial separation by reason of her husband's conviction for an aggravated assault upon herself; and by the Custody of Infants' Act, 1873, it is provided that in any deed of separation between the father and mother of an infant or infants, the father may by such deed give up the custody of such infant or infants to

the mother. But no Court is to enforce any such agreement unless satisfied that compulsion will be for the benefit of the child or children. The natural claim of the mother to guardianship on the death of the father is still denied by Parliament; and in case of separation or divorce, a blameless, virtuous woman, the only proper and efficient guardian of the children of a vicious and profligate father, is mocked by processes of law which, being complied with, enable her to obtain possession of her children, but only to the age of sixteen. To get even this measure of justice she must exhibit the fact that it is not hers by law; she must petition a Judge of the Chancery Division, who "*may*" thereupon order that her claim, founded on natural right, upon most obvious equity, and fraught with nothing but the clearest benefit to the infant children, shall be acknowledged. When this claim is again urged in Parliament, the following appeal by Mrs. Norton will surely be remembered:

Ah! how often in the course of this Session—in the course of this year—will the same men who read this appeal with a strong adverse prejudice, be roused by some thought in a favourite author; struck by some noble anecdote; touched by some beautiful pageant of human feeling, seen among glittering lights from a side box, chanted, perhaps, in a foreign tongue! And yet I have an advantage over these—for *my* history is *real*. I know there is no poetry in it to attract you. . . . There was none of the "pomp and circumstance" of those woes that affect you, when some faultless and impossible heroine makes you dream of righting all the wrongs in the world! But faulty as I may be—and prosaic and unsympathised with as my position might then be—it was UNJUST, and unjust *because your laws prevent justice*. Let that thought haunt you, through the music of your Sonnambulas and Desdemonas, and be with you in your readings of histories and romances, and your criticisms on the jurisprudence of countries less free than our own. I *really* wept and suffered in my early youth—for wrong done not *by* me, but *to* me, and the ghost of whose scandal is raised against me this day. I *really* suffered the extremity of earthly shame without deserving it (whatever chastisement my other faults may have deserved from Heaven). I *really* lost my young children—craved for them, struggled for them, was barred from them—and came too late to see one who had died a painful and convulsive death, except in his coffin. I *really* have gone through much that, if it were invented, would move you; but being of your every-day world, you are willing it should sweep past like a heap of dead leaves on the stream of time, and take its place with other things that have gone drifting down—

"Où va la feuille de Rose
Et la feuille du Laurier!"

The third matter is that of the Property of Married Women. When Mrs. Norton first wrote on this subject, a married woman had no property—she could have no property as the result of her own endeavours. Mrs. Norton said, "the power of earning, by literature—which fund (though it be the grant of Heaven and not the legacy of earth) is no more legally mine than my family property . . . the copyrights of my works, my very soul and brains are not my own."

In concluding her "Letter to the Queen" she wrote:—

Let the Lord Chancellor, whose office is thus described in Chamberlayne's *State of England*—"To judge, not according to the Common Law, as other Civil Courts do, but to moderate the rigour of the Law, and to judge according to Equity, Conscience, and Reason; and his oath is to do right to all manner of people, poor and rich, after the Laws and Customs of this Realm, and truly counsel the King"—let the Lord Chancellor, I say, the "Summus Cancellarius" of Great Britain, cancel, according to the laws and customs of this realm of England, my right to the labour of my own brain and pen; and docket it, among forgotten Chancery Papers, with a parody of Swift's contemptuous labelling—

"Only a Woman's Pamphlet."

But let the recollection of what I write remain with those who read; and above all, let the recollection remain with your Majesty, the one woman in England who *cannot* suffer wrong, and whose Royal assent will be formally necessary to any Marriage Reform Bill, which the Lord Chancellor, assembled Peers, and assembled Commons may think fit to pass, in the Parliament of this free nation, where, with a Queen on the throne, all other married women are legally "NON-EXISTENT."

That plea for "existence," thus put forward in 1855, Mrs. Norton renewed in 1874. But since 1874 no change whatever has been made in the Law affecting the Property of Married Women. In 1874, she distributed a few copies of a pamphlet entitled *Taxation by an Irresponsible Taxpayer*, which bears neither a date nor the name of any publisher. The *brochure* deals with the grievances of the London ratepayer; for humour, it might have been written by her grandfather.* Still she was "non-existent as a married woman. Non-existent for protection, but not non-existent for extortion. . . . Liable as a 'female occupier' to pay taxes, but not able as a 'female occupier' to hold my house except through trustees, or to compel by any pro-

* Mrs. Norton was grand-daughter to R. B. Sheridan.

cess of law the payment of an agreed income." She had been libelled and "informed that being a married woman, I could not prosecute of myself, that my husband must prosecute. There could be no prosecution, and I was left to study the grotesque anomaly in law of having my defence made *necessary*—and made *impossible*—by the same person." She was overcharged in respect of her house, and the condition of the street in which she lived was neglected. She set herself to work upon the local authorities, and soon discovered that "the ways of vestries (one of those corporate bodies without a conscience of whom Sydney Smith speaks) are past finding out." At last, "beginning to feel that curly irritation attributed proverbially to 'the worm that is trodden upon,'" she insisted "on knowing whose business it was to survey." In relating her endeavours to compel attention to the second head of complaint, she says: "I tried the simple and useful experiment of placing some waste sand, birdseed, withered chickweed, and refuse from a cage in the centre of the street opposite my door, where I had the satisfaction of seeing that it remained for more than ten days without being swept away." She proposed to the Vestry "that the elegant title of Chesterfield Street should be changed to Rumble Row, Oozy Lane, Parish Passage, or some other appropriate title." She asked to be informed "why *music* should be hawked without a licence more than any other commodity?" She complained that while the "'place of settlement' of any one of the dirty loungers who slouch along with greasy leather straps supporting discordant organs on their shoulders is 'no affair of the parish,' another man is incarcerated for spouting passages from Shakespeare's *Richard III.* and bidding a policeman (in that esteemed dramatist's words) 'take any form but that,' while English children 'found begging' or 'sleeping under archways' are (very properly) packed off to schools and reformatories to learn more regular habits of life." She declared that "the vigorous grasp of justice which squeezes pence from penny earnings for the compulsory education of the little truant who prefers the furrows of the plough to the path of knowledge, grows delicately helpless and relaxed when dealing with aristocratic neglect;" and cited "Lord Justice James, who, in deciding a Chancery suit this spring, observed: 'A man may leave a good

wife and deserving children penniless, and bestow the whole of his fortune upon the vilest companions of his profligacy and most wicked accomplices of his crimes, and the law cannot gainsay him.'"

The Law relating to the Property of Married Women has been amended, not in the spirit of justice, but with a grudging sense of expediency which has left it more full of anomalies than before. It is doubtful if the power of a married woman to engage in any remunerative occupation is not dependent on the will of her husband; it is certain he may prohibit her from earning anything. But if her occupation bring profits, those profits are now unquestionably her own. The payment due for her brain work or handicraft has, since 1870, ceased to be legally due and payable to her husband. If she inherit property by intestacy of the late owner, that is her own, but no bequest above £200 can belong to a married woman. No amendment of the law has touched her *status;* she is now as non-existent as she was before Mrs. Norton was born; she may be libelled with impunity; she cannot sue or be sued; all her personal property passes to her husband at the day of marriage, and his by the same process is the rental of her real property. When the Married Women's Property Bill was passed to the House of Lords in 1870, it contained two harmonious and interdependent provisions. One provided that a wife might retain as her own the property she possessed before marriage; the other, that a husband should no longer be liable for debts which his wife had contracted before marriage. The House of Lords held the former to be revolutionary, and struck it out; but their lordships, in their wisdom, retained the latter, and so left unmarried female traders with injured credit, and tradesmen generally with no remedy against a defaulting bride. The Act of 1870 thus provided women—it has been suggested by way of dowry—with a mode of cheating creditors. Women who could obtain goods on credit before marriage could avoid payment by matrimony; and one case is on record in which a costly pianoforte was obtained in this way. The Act of 1870 absolved the husband from liability; and the wife, remaining non-existent, could not be sued. But this legislative blunder had cruel consequences for women traders, who could obtain no credit when there was ground for suspicion that

by accepting the non-existence of married women, they might defraud the creditor. That tradesmen—electors and fathers—should be cheated, was to Parliament intolerable, and haste was made, upon discovery of the defect in 1874, to put a patch upon this loose place in the Act of 1870. It was then enacted—*not* that a wife should be responsible for her debts incurred before marriage, which would have implied the legal existence of a married woman—but that a husband should be liable for such debts to the extent of the property acquired through the marriage; the confusion being well preserved by the fact that a wife's property, in her husband's hands, is not liable for debts contracted by her before marriage, in regard to marriages which took place between 1870 and 1874.

When it was proposed, in 1870, that by contracting marriage a woman should not forfeit her property, Lord Penzance, then Judge Ordinary in the Divorce Court, made a speech, of which the *réchauffée* was again served up in the last Session of Parliament. His lordship suggested that if a married woman could hold property, she would go into partnership with some cousin "who need not be a woman." Lord Westbury had a fear that if some one left her £20,000 she would spend it on a diamond necklace. The *Times*, in a most liberal article, ridiculed these absurd alarms, suggested that Lord Penzance's judgment had been "warped by the nature of his duties;" that being "accustomed to see nothing but the ugly side of matrimonial nature," he might "be excused for taking a sort of Old Bailey view of the marriage state, and particularly for looking upon wives as a set of extravagant quéans, with whom flirtation is only kept short of adultery by the fear of himself and the machinery he directs." And with regard to all such arguments the *Times* asked, "Is there any reason to suppose that she will be the less faithful to the marriage relation when she has the responsibility of property, and when society looks to her to advance the interests of her children, than when she is dependent for everything upon her husband; and on his failing her, must look to some friend who, to use Lord Penzance's phrase, 'need not be a woman?' We believe that the case of a married woman does not differ from that of all other human beings, in the fact that a certain degree of pecuniary independence tends to the

promotion of morality and the proper fulfilment of the duties of life."

Lord Coleridge, in the past year, introduced a Bill which would have given effect to these sentiments, and full legal existence to a married woman. But it was hustled out of the House of Peers by the Lord Chancellor, who for the occasion reproduced the "Old Bailey view" of Lord Penzance. Lord Coleridge has the support in this matter of another very distinguished Judge. The Master of the Rolls has declared that to him "it is not intelligible upon what principle a woman should be considered incapable of contracting, immediately after she has, with the sanction of the law, entered into the most important contract conceivable." Sir George Jessel has further pointed to the fact that "the slavery laws of antiquity are the origin of the Common Law upon this subject," and has expressed his astonishment "that a law founded upon such principles should have survived to the nineteenth century." "The rule in this matter"—I am quoting the words of Mr. Mill—"is simple; whatever would be the wife's or husband's, if they were not married, should be under their exclusive control during marriage; which need not interfere with the power to tie up property by settlement, in order to preserve it for children. Some people are sentimentally shocked at the idea of a separate interest in money matters, as inconsistent with the fusion of two lives into one. For my own part, I am one of the strongest supporters of community of goods, when resulting from entire unity of feeling in the owners, which makes all things common between them. But I have no relish for a community of goods resting on the doctrine that what is mine is yours, but what is yours is not mine; and I should prefer to decline entering into such a compact with anyone, though I were myself the person to profit by it."

In no point did Mrs. Norton find the law relating to the Property of Married Women more galling than in the nullity of a contract, securing her income during separation, which was "repudiated on the legal technicality that 'man and wife being one, a man could not contract with his own wife.'" But at all points she was met and injured by the laws.

When Englishmen beat General Haynau in rude recompense for his alleged flogging of Hungarian women, a charge which the

General denied, Mrs. Norton asked: "Is there no pain and degradation except *physical* pain and degradation? Is there no indecency but in ideas of nudity? No barbarity but in stripes and blows? The Haynaus of England are they who will not help to change such laws! Had I been a man I would have worked out their revision and reform; but I am only a woman—and, in the land which my Queen governs, women count for nothing in important matters." Then, with reviving eloquence, she resolved, "woman though I be," she would do what she could, and saying, "This is not a day to smile at *any* boast of what accidental circumstances or individual energy may bring about," drew this beautiful illustration:

Sixty-eight years ago, on the deck of a vessel struggling through a stormy passage to the Isle of Martinique, sate the mournful mother of a little girl only three years old. This mother was young, beautiful, forsaken. Her husband, being weary of her, had become "a little profligate"—and the wife, yearning—as many a broken-hearted girl has yearned before, under such circumstances of neglect and disappointment—for the old dear home of her childhood, was returning to her parents and friends. There was no fierceness in that woman's heart. Her grief was the gentle grief of Faust's Margaret:

"Ich wein'—ich wein'—ich weine!"

In love and generous devotion through life, she had scarcely her equal; and she had through life the fate those women who seem to deserve it least, oftenest obtain. For that mournful Creole, weeping alone on the stormy seas—helplessly returning to her own family—was Josephine de Beauharnais, the neglected wife of the Comte de Beauharnais, afterwards the repudiated Empress of Napoleon I., and that little child—who sate trembling in the storm by its mother's side—was Hortense, afterwards Queen of Holland, and mother of Napoleon III.

If—as that Creole mother wept—some voice had whispered: "Your lot is grief; grief now, and grief, in spite of splendour, in the years to come: but you shall be Empress of France: the little girl by your side shall be a Queen; her son an Emperor; and the music of a chance love song which that child shall compose in after years, shall become the great solemn march and national hymn of France; for ever making melody of triumph in her son's ears, whether sounding on his native shores among millions of electing subjects or played in the royal palaces of a rival nation, proud of reckoning on his friendship and alliance,"—I say if such a whisper had come on the wild wind, and mingled with the dash of the stormy spray, would not the fervent-hearted Creole have shuddered with fear, lest delirium—not hope—had taken possession of her mind? God only sets the measure of *what may*

be: and I say my son or grandson may be Lord Chancellor, and may alter these laws in favour of the lawless, at present in force in England.

"The greater part of what women write about women is mere sycophancy to men." That was Mr. Mill's opinion, and it is true to a certain extent even of Mrs. Norton. She resembled Madame de Staël in this amiable weakness. "Un homme peut braver l'opinion; une femme doit s'y soumettre" (A man may brave opinion; a woman must submit), is the motto of *Delphine*. The title-page of Mrs. Norton's boldest and best work, "A Letter to the Queen," from which some of my quotations have been made, has for a motto, "Only a woman's hair." Injustice called from her eloquent and passionate protest; she claimed "protection" from the law. The true right of women—that of equality before the law—she never put forward; she was apt to confuse that claim with a plea for natural equality, which can be no creation of Parliament, and has nothing whatever to do with law. She declared her "honest conviction to be" that "women have one RIGHT (perhaps that only one). They have a right, founded on nature, equity, and religion, to the protection of man." She was bitterly conscious that in her own case even this pitiful claim had been denied. Had she been less unhappy, less conscious of her personal petition, she would have been more stubborn; her claim would have been a larger petition of right. She was overweighted with the burden of her own sorrows. She was the victim of bad laws. But her hope that her sufferings would be the seed of reform, was a well-grounded hope. Her belief that such examples are "the little hinges on which the great doors of justice are made to turn" had a sure foundation; and the only prophecy on which she ventured has been verified, and will be further verified. It was this: "In our little corner of the earth—where so much besides is busy and fermenting for change—the time is ripely come for alteration in the Laws for Women. *And they will be changed.*"

A. Ireland & Co., Printers, Pall Mall, Manchester.